

# CheapTelephoneBills.com

Comparisons That Put Consumers First

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November 8, 2004

Office of the Secretary  
FCC  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

**Docket No. 04-398**

Greetings,

I run a consumer telecom website and will include my comments on mobile termination rates based on input from consumers. Numerous times I tried to submit this using the form on the FCC website - [http://gulfoss2.fcc.gov/ecfs/Upload?hot\\_docket=1009400821|04-398|The+Effect+of+Foreign+Mobile+Termination+Rates+on+U.S.+Consumers&Send=Continue](http://gulfoss2.fcc.gov/ecfs/Upload?hot_docket=1009400821|04-398|The+Effect+of+Foreign+Mobile+Termination+Rates+on+U.S.+Consumers&Send=Continue) - but there was always an Error message after submitting the form.

Sincerely,



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## **The Effect of Foreign Mobile Termination Rates on U.S. Consumers**

### **Docket No. 04-398**

**1. Are consumers aware of the surcharges associated with making a call from the United States to a foreign mobile phone?**

Certainly when a consumer first begins making these types of calls, most are not aware unless the carrier website or salesperson is very upfront about this. The problem is, many websites only include this in their small print.

**2. When placing a call to mobile phones, are consumers aware that they are calling a mobile phone, and are they aware of the charges for such calls?**

For the most part, consumers know whether they are calling to a wireless phone. Although I do know of cases where consumers have called a military base or apartment complex and ended up paying mobile termination rates.

**3. What is the possible effect of high foreign mobile termination rates on U.S. consumers?**

Simply put, US consumers are calling less or at the least, talking less. This is a strain on US consumers due to the increase in wireless users overseas, especially when the person receiving the call has no landline.

**4. Is there any evidence that mobile termination rates are affecting the number of minutes of calls being made from the United States to mobile phones in other countries?**

Yes, based on input I have received from consumers. In fact, just today I have been trying to help a consumer who was using a 10-10 number and didn't know the rate to a mobile phone in Ireland was higher than to a landline. She said she has stopped calling her friend overseas because of the higher rate.

**5. Do U.S. customers have a meaningful opportunity to select lower mobile surcharges among U.S. international carriers?**

Yes, although most consumers don't take nearly enough time to shop around and compare carriers.

**6. Are there consumer complaints concerning the cost of calling from the United States to a foreign mobile phone? If so, how many and what type of consumer complaints have been received?**

All the complaints relate to the increase cost for some countries. For example, a consumer can call a landline in the UK for 4 cents, but to a wireless it might be 24 cents per minute. I have no idea how many complaints I have heard about it, although it would be in the hundreds.

**7. What is the value of consumer alerts and consumer education as a means of addressing foreign mobile termination rates?**

Consumer alerts are fine, but carriers (especially on the net) need to be more upfront about this and take it out of the small print and include the info where consumers don't have to search for it.

**8. What consumer education and outreach efforts, if any, are being conducted by U.S. carriers to educate U.S. customers regarding foreign mobile termination rates and surcharges?**

I know of NO specific campaigns from carriers to educate consumers about this subject.

**9. To the extent that such consumer education efforts are taking place, what effect, if any, do these efforts have on the calling behavior of U.S. customers and on foreign mobile termination rates and surcharges?**

Other than including mobile rate info on their websites, I am not aware of any carriers that have went out of their way to warn consumers.